

Safety Review Committee

February 18, 2005

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present

Joel Ager, Michael Banda, John Bercovitz, Paul Blodgett, Ben Feinberg, Phil Hugenholtz, Richard Kadel, Don Lucas, Augusto Macchiavelli, Robert Mueller, Karen Ramorino, Pat Thomas for Peter Seidl, Scott Taylor

Members Absent

Ken Fletcher, Mack Kennedy, Linfeng Rao, Linda Smith, Weyland Wong, Hisao Yokota

Others Present

John Chernowski, Richard DeBusk, Eugene Lau, Gary Piermattei

Comments from the Chair

Incoming SRC Chair Don Lucas thanked outgoing Chair Ben Feinberg for his service to the committee.

Committee members requested an update on the status of the proposed bicycle safety policy at the March meeting. It was unclear whether the policy requires SRC approval. Joel Ager commented that bicycles are a site access issue for students and guests.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved.

Earth Sciences Division has had their Integrated Safety Management (ISM) Board hearing. The ISM Board approved a four-year interval until the next MESH review.

The Mechanical Safety Subcommittee (MSS) is concerned that researchers will avoid using their services, which are mechanical calculations and safety advice, if they are asked to be policeman when researchers ignore safe practices. It was suggested that the MSS call the division safety coordinator as soon as they get a request from a researcher for services. Concerns should be entered into the Laboratory Corrective Action Tracking System (LCATS) and tracked until they are resolved. To ensure problems are resolved, the subcommittee should notify the division safety coordinator first, then if not resolved in a timely manner, contact the Division Director. Some researchers are not aware of the services the subcommittee can offer to help solve pressure safety problems and do calculations. Subcommittee activities should be publicized in Berkeley Lab Today and Currents. John Bercovitz could speak at a Safety Coordinators' meeting.

Spot awards are one method to reward people who notice and report safety problems. EH&S can give awards to people in other divisions. LBNL used to give safety awards – dinner and a watch – for people who made significant safety contributions. The spot award authorizations are approvals to spend division money rather than additional funding. The amount authorized is based on the division payroll; however, divisions can request additional authorization.

There is a perception that all accidents/incidents cause shutdowns of operations. Some people are afraid of getting in trouble, especially with radiation or electrical problems. ALS had a recent electrical shock accident, and the DOE Berkeley Site Office (BSO) sent an e-mail to Ray Orbach that night. Ray Orbach is directing site offices to report all accidents and incidents immediately, even if they do not meet the ORPS criteria for a reportable occurrence. It is not clear what is considered an "incident". There will be a new site office head in March. ORPS reporting criteria are somewhat ambiguous. Category 3 ORPS reports do not require BSO approval. These issues need to be discussed with the new BSO head. There should be a measured, proportional response. The Molecular Foundry construction project had a small fire that was also reported to Ray Orbach, and there were no repercussions.

Accident reports go to the home supervisor, and matrixed supervisors are not always being informed and may be left out of the investigation. Other people who use the same equipment need to know if there is a safety problem. The Human Resources database needs a code for designating the matrix supervisor.

We need to improve the process for generating Lessons Learned from Supervisor's Accident Reports. Peter Lichty, John Chernowski, and Eugene Lau plan to meet March 10 to discuss the best ways to publicize lessons learned. The SRC members requested an update from Eugene Lau and Phyllis Pei.

Laser Safety Subcommittee Update

Don Lucas is completing his duties as chair of the Laser Safety Subcommittee. Bob Schoenlein will be the new chair. The subcommittee meets monthly. A recent activity was arranging mandatory laser safety awareness retraining for all class 3 and 4 laser users. LBNL EH&S and UC campus safety officers spoke at the classes. They discussed the consequences of accidents and shared fate of laser users if experiments are shut down. The classes were advertised in several ways. More people came to the classes than expected from the number of laser users. Safety personnel and other people who work around lasers were interested.

There was another recent laser accident at National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). The researcher did not usually need eyewear because density filters reduced the intensity of the beam to a safe level. Filters were removed without first putting on the eyewear, resulting in an injury. NREL laser work was suspended following the accident. It is LBNL policy to wear protective eyewear whenever there is an open beam.

Laser Safety Officer Ted de Castro is visiting all class 3 and 4 laser labs to observe alignment procedures. He has started with the Environmental Energy Technologies Division, and is currently working with the Chemical Sciences Division.

The subcommittee is looking at the new types of fiber optic systems that are becoming more common. Light-driven switching in computers and network devices are not defined as "lasers" and are usually hidden under covers. Power levels are increasing and now there are sometimes

free-space connections outside cables. Potential hazards and best-practice controls need to be identified. There may be training available from the telecom industry.

Visitors using laser systems are a concern. The Principal Investigators are responsible, but sometimes have trouble controlling the activities of outside “experts”. PIs are asking for more assistance from the Laser Safety Officer in checking visitor’s procedures and experimental set-ups. The subcommittee can recommend increased laser safety staffing if needed.

Non-Smoking Policy

LBNL Fire Marshal Gary Piermattei described changes to the non-smoking policy. The changes were prompted by a fire near the abandoned Bldg. 29 trailers. A cigarette was crushed in the leaf debris on the deck, but probably continued burning for many hours, igniting the nearby trailer. The sprinkler system in the trailer extinguished the fire. If the fire had occurred during firestorm weather conditions, or there had not been a sprinkler nearby, the situation could have been much worse. Previously, PUB-3000 defined non-smoking areas, and smoking was allowed everywhere else. The smoker that started the fire didn’t violate the policy. Now smoking is restricted to paved outdoor areas away from buildings. The new policy emphasizes the responsibility of smokers to ensure their activities are safe. The previous fire marshal allowed smoking on the deck outside the cafeteria because there were sandbags placed under the deck. The new policy was reviewed by Human Resources. The fire marshal is responsible for enforcing the policy, but he expects lots of help from the non-smokers. Signs should be posted by building entrances to inform people of the 20-foot non-smoking zone. There should be an easy way to obtain the cigarette and ash disposal cans.

Self-Assessment Performance Criteria

John Chernowski from the Office of Assessment and Assurance described changed to the division ES&H self-assessment performance metrics. The metrics are designed to measure performance for each of the ISM Core Functions. The performance year is from July 1 – June 30. OAA works with EH&S and the division safety coordinators to develop the metrics. Some of the metrics are the same as last year. The ones that have changed for Performance Year 2005 include:

- E2. The waste minimization metric offers some new options. Divisions can perform environmental reviews for new work, waste minimization, or resource conservation projects. EH&S can provide assistance.
- E7. The ergonomics metric has four requirements: 90% of required staff completing EHS060, completion of 100% of workstation evaluation requests, address recommendations from evaluations appropriately, and control non-workstation ergonomic hazards. All four criteria must be met to get a green score. Some of the criteria are subjective and it is not clear exactly how they will be evaluated.
- E8. The chemical inventory metric requires at least 85% of the chemical inventory to be updated (measured by either % of chemical owners or % of locations updated).
- E10. This metric measures the completion of OSHA instances cited in the 2004 inspection. The 67% completion target is intended to measure whether LBNL is

on track to complete all findings by May 2006. Divisions don't have complete control over their ability address some of the instances. There are some funding issues and need for technical assistance. There is a discrepancy between the 60-day LCATS closure target and the OSHA closure target date.

- E11. The work within authorizations metric now includes environmental violations and unplanned releases of hazardous substances above reportable quantities. This is part of the overall goal to integrate more environmental management considerations into ISM. The injury and accident metrics consider both the overall Total Recordable Case and Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred and the improvement rate. The intent was to recognize that some divisions' work has a higher hazard level than others. Some SRC members objected to giving credit for improvement rate because DOE does not consider hazard levels or improvement rates in ranking the labs. There was some discussion as to whether there should be different accident rate goals for different divisions. DOE does not hold all facilities equally accountable. For example, some labs have been allowed to exclude construction activities or particular projects.
- E13. This metric is a qualitative measure as to whether divisions have addressed their "special responsibility" to provide for student safety. The measurement is subjective, and is intended mainly to raise awareness.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 A.M.
Respectfully submitted,
Patricia M. Thomas, SRC Secretary